

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 SSM-03 MCT-01 /078 W
-----009400 031111Z /11

O 031032Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8526
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 3686

TEL AVIV FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, CASC, LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: JULY 3, 1978, 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 3672 (DTG 021930Z JUL 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SYRIANS HAVE REDUCED ARTILLERY SHELLING,
BUT STEADY SMALL-ARMS FIRE, GROUND CONTACTS, AND SOME ARTILLERY
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FIRING IS CONTINUING IN EAST BEIRUT AREA. DANY CHAMOUN FLATLY
PREDICTS MORE FIGHTING. SIXTY OR MORE LEBANESE HAVE BEEN
KILLED AND MANY BUILDINGS HEAVILY DAMAGED, INCLUDING THE NLP
AND PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS AND HOTEL DIEU HOSPITAL. CHAMILLE
CHAMOUN APPEALED TO THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER "CIVILIZED
PEOPLE" TO INTERVENE TO STOP THE FIGHTING. THERE HAS BEEN
NO MAJOR VIOLENCE IN WEST BEIRUT. END SUMMARY.

2. SHELLING REDUCED.

A. SYRIANS REDUCED ARTILLERY SHELLING OF EAST BEIRUT AREA MORNING OF JULY 3, AFTER SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFIZ AL-ASAD HAD ISSUED AN ORDER AT 23:15 HOURS ON JULY 2 TO STOP SHOOTING. THE ORDER, BROADCAST BY BEIRUT RADIO, WAS ISSUED SHORTLY AFTER A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN ASAD AND PRESIDENT SARKIS. THERE IS STILL STEADY SMALL ARMS FIRE AND SOME ARTILLERY FIRING, MOSTLY IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH-SHIAH AREA. ACCORDING TO TANZIM LEADER GEORGE ADWAN AND DATT SOURCES, MILITIA ARE CONTINUING TO CLASH ON GROUND WITH SYRIANS, GENERALLY TO ADVANTAGE OF MILITIA.

3. DANY SAYS MORE FIGHTING.

DANY CHAMOUN TOLD POLOFF FOLLOWING ON JULY 3: "I CAN'T SEE ANY WAY THE SYRIANS CAN REMAIN AMONGST US . . . THE FIGHTING WILL CONTINUE . . . I CAN'T LOOK AT A SYRIAN SOLDIER ANY MORE . . . I WOULD GO TO ISRAEL, BUT I CAN'T GET THERE . . . WE MAY HAVE TO MAKE A COLLECTIVE DECLARATION ASKING FOR HELP FROM ISRAEL." DANY ALSO VOLUNTEERED THAT NLP MILITIA HAD TAKEN LEBANESE ARMY EQUIPMENT FROM THE ARMY'S GEOGRAPHIC AFFAIRS OFFICE IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH.

4. HEAVY DAMAGE.

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A. DAMAGE TO EAST BEIRUT AREA HAS BEEN EXTREMELY HEAVY. ACCORDING TO L-ORIENTE-JOUR, MORE THAN 2,000 SHELLS FELL THERE ON JULY 2, KILLING 60 PEOPLE AND WOUNDING 300 OTHERS. (VARIOUS OBSERVERS, INCLUDING MARINE GUARDS AT YARZE, COUNTED 10-30 TANK/ARTILLERY/ROCKET ROUNDS PER MINUTE FIRED BY SYRIAN UNITS.)

B. THE POLITICAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE PHALANGE PARTY IN SAYFI (NEAR THE PORT) WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED, AS WAS THAT OF THE NLP IN ASHRAFIYAH (SEE PREVIOUS SITREP). ADWAN CLAIMED THAT NOT A SINGLE BUILDING WAS UNDAMAGED IN THE EAST BEIRUT NEIGHBORHOOD OF BADARO. THE PHALANGIST VOICE OF LEBANON (CENTRAL ASHRAFIYAH) WAS KNOCKED OUT OF COMMISSION FOR SEVERAL HOURS. THE FIRE AT THE PORT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PUT OUT. ONE SHIP WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED, AND MANY OTHERS FLED THE PORT. BEIRUT AIRPORT REMAINS OPEN.

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C. THE HOTEL DIEU HOSPITAL (SOUTHERN ASHRAFIYAH) AND ITS ANNEXES WERE HIT BY 130 SHELLS, L'ORIENT LE-JOUR SAID. THE MOTHER SUPERIOR SAID THE BUILDING WAS IN RUINS, THE WOUNDED AND SICK LYING IN THE CORRIDORS. SHE CHARGED THAT THE HOTEL DIEU WAS A TARGET. THE SAINT GEORGES HOSPITAL AND THE JETAWI HOSPITALS IN ASHRAFIYAH WERE ALSO HIT.

5. APPEAL BY CAMILLE.

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A. CAMILLE CHAMOUN ON JULY 2 APPEALED TO THE UNITED STATES, THE SOVIET UNION, FRANCE, VATICAN AND ALL COUNTRIES WITH A SENSE OF HUMAN VALUES TO INTERVENE AS "CIVILIZED PEOPLE AGAINST THE WAR OF

EXTERMINATION UNDERTAKEN BY SYRIA AGAINST AN UNARMED CIVILIAN POPULATION."

B. CHAMOUN ADDED THAT "THE UNITED STATES WHICH DECLARIES ITSELF THE CHAMPION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN, SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO APPLY ALL ITS WEIGHT TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF 600,000 SOULS IN DANGER. WE RECALL THAT PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER DEFENDED ONE OPPRESSED PERSON. ALL THE MORE REASON THAT HE SHOULD INTERVENE TO DEFEND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LEBANESE THREATENED WITH GENOCIDE."

6. WEST BEIRUT SITUATION.

THERE HAS BEEN NO MAJOR VIOLENCE IN WEST BEIRUT. ACCORDING TO ONE EMBASSY SOURCE, HOWEVER, MILITIA OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT ARE TAKING UP POSITIONS IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT WEST BEIRUT. TRAFFIC IS CONSIDERABLY BELOW NORMAL, AND THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO MOVEMENT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT. ALMOST ALL EMBASSY EMPLOYEES FROM EAST BEIRUT DID NOT COME TO WORK ON JULY 3. VISA APPLICATIONS ARE RUNNING AT ABOUT HALF THE USUAL VOLUME AS OF EARLY JULY 3.

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